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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN  
AND FOR DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CRIMINAL DIVISION

CASE NO. 75-10539

*Sub.*  
STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

RAMON DON ESTEVEZ,

Defendant.

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DADE COUNTY, FLA.  
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Public Defender's Office  
1351 Northwest 12th Street  
Miami, Florida  
Monday, February 9, 1976  
3:00 o'clock P.M.

DEPOSITION OF IGNACIO VASQUEZ,

taken before JOSEPH S. SCHWARTZ, Court Reporter  
and Notary Public in and for the State of Florida  
at Large, pursuant to Notice of Taking Deposition  
file in the above-styled cause.

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## APPEARANCES:

RICHARD GERSTEIN, ESQ.,  
State Attorney  
BY: JAMES WOODARD, ESQ.,  
Assistant State Attorney  
On behalf of the Plaintiff

MECHANIC & GOLDSTEIN, ESQS.,  
Attorneys for Defendant  
BY: STEVE MECHANIC &  
STEVE GOLDSTEIN, ESQS.,

I N D E XWITNESSESDIRECTCROSS

Ignacio Vasquez

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Thereupon --

IGNACIO VASQUEZ

was called as a witness in behalf of the Defendant,  
and after having been first duly cautioned and  
sworn, testified as follows:

DIRECT-EXAMINATION

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q Please state your name and official  
occupation?

A. Ignacio Vasquez and I am with the  
Public Safety Department as a police officer.

Q You are with the Organized Crime  
Bureau?

A. Yes.

Q For how long approximately?

A. Ten months.

Q Do you work with any particular  
person or partner with O.C.B.?

A. Yes.

Q Who?

A. Joseph Benitez.

Q Joseph Benitez?

A. Yes.



Q What is his relationship to Daniel Benitez?

A Brother.

Q Your involvement with Ramon Don Estevez case in this particular case involving these weapons started when, do you remember which date it was?

A I believe it was in October.

Q What date?

A I do not recall.

Q If I tell you the information is October 21 does that sound right, and I would not lie to you?

A Yes.

Q My question then would be if that is the date did you have any involvement with this case prior to that date?

A In what respect?

Q Radio information regarding certain things, and conversations from other police officers regarding certain things?

A Are you referring to a report?

Q Verbal or written?



A. Yes, we received a report.

Q From Substation number four?

A. Yes.

Q When?

A. When?

Q Yes, how much before October 21?

A. Less than a week, three or four days.

Q This report that you received did you actually read it?

A. I read it.

Q That was the report by Officer Vetterick?

A. Yes.

Q Did you personally speak to Officer Vetterick?

A. No.

Q Do you know if anybody and did any of your people speak to him?

A. I am certain that someone from the squad perhaps did.

Q But you did not?

A. I did not.



Q This report this is the October 12 report?

A Yes.

Q You read this report?

A Yes.

Q Have you discussed it with anybody?

A With Daniel Benitez and we could have discussed it, but I would not tell you that we sat down and thoroughly discussed the report but perhaps we had discussed it.

Q Let us say it was three or four days in advance between that point in time and when you had the report and why did you wait two or three or four or whatever length of time it was?

A We probably were busy with other issues.

Q If the report indicates the possibility of illegal weapons and that is what we are speaking of, right?

A Yes.

Q The report is dated a week or so



— in the past and I imagine your purpose would be to go and investigate these illegal weapons, right?

A. Correct.

Q The longer you waited the longer it could possibly be hidden or destroyed or whatever, right?

A. It could be true.

Q Yet you did not think you should hurry on to it?

A. I personally did not have anything to say on that issue and I am only a police officer.

Q Who does?

A. I don't know why and it would be a week or as many days after we received the report to go ahead and look into this problem.

Q Who told you that?

A. I do not recall.

Q Now, sir, the date of the 12th and it arrives and then you go to work in the morning?

A. Excuse me, but you say the report is dated on the 12th?

— Q The date of the 21st arrives and



— how did you know to go to that and who told you that you are going to go down to Pirhanna-Diesel Company and check out the guns?

A. I do not believe anybody told us and we just decided to do it.

Q When you say we who do you mean?

A. The four individuals.

Q The four individuals?

A. The four individuals that are involved in the arrest, and that would be Benitez and myself.

Q Why those four particular people?

A. Because we are the only ones there.

Q Who did you say your sergeant was?

A. Vetterick, but again, I do not believe that he gave us a specific order to do it and it was just something that was there and it had to be done so that day it happened and we had to do it.

Q Whose idea was it to get the probation officer?

A. I think we concurred and most  
— of us concurred that it should be a good idea to





— get Mr. Keller and to take him along.

Q Why, what was your reason for it?

A My reason was because I thought it would be a good idea to take him along.

It would show him that it would indicate that his probationer was not adhering to his probation rules and so that was my theory and that he should be made aware of it since Mr. Don Estevez is under the authority of the Parole and Probation Board.

Q When you got down there it would have been then the probation officer who was present and the two Benitez brothers and yourself?

A Yes, sir, and Detective Rapado.

I do not believe you subpoenaed him.

Q Is his name Humberto?

A Yes.

Q He was the other one with you?

A Yes, sir, he was with Daniel Benitez.

Q You took two separate cars?

A Yes.



Q. Who was with the probation officer?

A. I believe that he was with us,  
and with myself and Detective Joseph Benitez.

Q. Did you have any discussions with  
him on the way down there?

A. Discussions in what respect?

Q. Did you mention to him and did  
you say, "I am with the O.C.B. and we have a  
report that one of your probationers has guns  
in that place," and so on, sir?

A. We informed him that we had  
received reports that Mr. Estevez was possibly in  
possession of firearms.

Q. What did he say to you?

A. Let's go over there and find out.

Q. He did not mention that to you  
and he did not mention to you that he had discussed  
that with Mr. Don Estevez in the past?

A. No.

Q. You got down there; it is daytime,  
right?

A. It is cloudy, and it is about  
5:00 o'clock in the afternoon.



Q So you walked, and I would imagine it would be a fenced in area and was it closed or open?

A I don't recall whether it was closed or opened.

Q Did you go through the fenced in area or through the front door?

A Through the front door.

Q When you got in and you personally noticed what; in other words things that you saw; were you the first one in there?

A No.

Q Where were you?

A I may be wrong but I believe that Mr. Keller was there, then Detective Daniel Benitez and myself and I believe I was the third person in that order.

Q So other than seeing those people in front of you what else did you observe?

A Mr. Don Estevez was in the work shop area.

Q To the right or left?

A Directly in front of you.



— You see, it could be seen from the front entrance door.

Q Where is the office?

A To your right.

Q Right away?

A Yes.

Q The front door that you entered was it opened or did it have to be unlocked?

A It was opened.

Q I mean physically opened?

A It was open.

Q You just went in?

A No, because Mr. Don Estevez observed Mr. Keller he acknowledged him.

Q How did he acknowledge him?

A Who?

Q How did he get through the front door?

A The door is opened and if you open this door --

Q Which door?

A The front door of the factory.

MR. WOODARD: Perhaps if you have



— a picture.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q The front door was physically opened and then Mr. Keller was there and Don Estevez acknowledged him?

A Yes.

Q Did you notice in any particular work area Mr. Armando Barbillo and those other people?

A No, sir, I don't notice those people and I didn't notice Barbillo there.

Q How about Marin?

A I didn't know him at the time so I could not tell you.

Q There were other workers?

A Right.

Q Ramon was not alone?

A No.

Q Did you walk to him or did he come to you?

A Well, when he acknowledged Mr. Keller he commenced coming towards us.

— So at the same time we met in



— that corridor that separates the entrance door to the workshop.

Q Now, if you all met in the corridor and the office and you would still be right within close proximity to the offices?

By the way, the office door, was that opened or closed?

A Those are small details and I didn't pay attention to it so I would say that I don't recall.

Q Do you know how you got into the office and were you the first one in and did Ramon go in first or did Benitez go in first?

A Mr. Keller informed Don Estevez of our purpose.

Q What did he say that you heard?

A Something to the effect that "Ramon, I believe the officer has information that you have guns in your possession."

At that time Ramon Don Estevez asked Mr. Keller and at the same time asked us to go in and he said "to come into my office."

Q Who is it if anyone, the State



— of Florida, the defense, your superiors, and who is it that is telling you to impress so clearly the fact that it is his office and are you doing that all by yourself?

A. Those are my words.

Q So when he said "Come into my office," how did you get into his office?

A. He opened the door.

Q With a key?

A. No, I am not certain whether he used a key and I believe he did not.

Q Is there a sign out front that says, "Office?"

A. If there is one I don't recall it.

Q Is there a sign outside that says "Ramon Don Estevez?"

A. No.

Q Then when you entered the office all of you went in and that is all four of you and Ramon?

A. Ramon was in front and then Mr. Keller and then the rest of us followed.

— Q Now, in this office there is a



— desk, some chairs, a sofa, a cabinet, and some plaques?

A. Yes.

Q Allegedly right against the sofa standing up were three weapons?

A. Not allegedly, they were there.

Q I was not there?

A. Well I was.

Q Three?

A. Four.

Q You had no trouble seeing them?

A. No, sir, you did not have to look over anything and they were in plain view, yes, sir.

Q I would imagine that one of the officers or some of the officers would have gone over there and taken those weapons, and did you?

A. I made two weapons safe and by safe I mean I removed the clip and I took the round that was in the chamber out of the chamber.

Q Did anyone tell you not to do that and did Ramon or any of the other employees try





— to interfere with you at all?

A. No.

Q Did anyone sit down in that office or did you just stand around?

A. Who do you mean?

Q Did anyone sit down and did you stand up?

A. Yes, I believe I stood up.

Q Did Keller stand or sit if you recall?

A. I don't recall.

Q Where was Ramon at this time and I imagine he was answering questions?

A. Yes.

Q Was he standing up?

A. Yes.

Well, I could not say whether he is standing up for a while, you know, and then he sat behind the desk and that escapes me now.

Q What did you personally ask him or did you hear other people asking him while you were in the office?

A. He was asked if there were any



— other guns on the premises and he said, "No."

Q He would have been asked that before anyone asked him what these guns were doing here?

A That has already been asked.

Q Who asked him that?

A I think we all did.

MR. MECHANIC: All right.

BY MR. GOLDSTEIN:

Q Sir, let us get it in order.

When you entered the office how did you come to get into the main office?

A It is like I stated before and it was 5:00 o'clock.

Then as I stated before, also, we met in the corridor that connects that shop to the street and the main entrance.

After Mr. Don Estevez was informed of our purpose there he invited Mr. Keller and all of us into the office.

Then we saw the guns standing up on the couch.

Q How many people entered the



— office at this time.

A. Mr. Don Estevez went in first.

Then Mr. Keller followed.

Then the Benitez brothers could have been behind Mr. Keller or myself.

I believe that was it.

Q Now, sir, were there any employees in the office?

A. At the time when Mr. Don Estevez went in, no, sir.

Q Were there any employees -- did any employees go in with you?

A. No.

Q Was the door opened or closed prior to the time when Don Estevez was attempting to go in?

A. He had to open it so it was closed and it was not locked.

Q It was unlocked but it was closed?

A. Right.

Q So once you got inside did you say that there were no other employees and no other people who came in except that officer?



A. None that I recall; there could have been.

Q. Did anybody close the door?

A. I do not believe it was closed.

Q. What took place inside of the office?

A. We noticed the guns.

Q. What happened at that time?

A. He was asked why he kept those guns and I believe he said something.

Q. Who asked him that?

A. Most of us asked him the same question.

Then Mr. Keller asked him, and he said, "What are those guns for," and he stated something and he said that they were for security and that the men handle it.

Q. For what?

A. That it is for security and that the men handle them.

Q. All right, continue.

A. Then we asked him why he needed the guns and I did not believe I asked him that



— but I recall someone asked him that.

You see, I proceeded into one of the rifles and made it safe and that was done for safety reasons.

Q How many did you make safe?

A Two.

Q Did anybody make the others safe?

A Yes, sir, I think Joseph Benitez did.

Q All right.

A It was a little confusing and there was some confusion and Mr. Keller and Mr. Benitez were asking questions of Don Estevez and I was making the guns safe.

Q When you said that you are making the guns safe is that just an expression that you use which means to unload a gun?

A Yes, I take the clips off and the rounds out of the chambers.

Q Then what happened?

A Then Mr. Don Estevez was asked if there were any other guns.

Q Who asked that question?



A. Daniel Benitez.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q. He was asked why he needs them and the answer was for what reason?

A. That it was for security purposes.

Q. Did he elaborate on it, and did you question that?

A. No.

Q. Did anyone elaborate on that, and did anyone say, "What do you mean by that," and then he would answer, "That was it," and is that right?

A. Well, he answered it and I probably was busy doing my thing.

BY MR. GOLDSTEIN:

Q. Then I asked you what was the next thing that happened, and you said someone asked him another question?

A. Well, like I said, he was asked if there were any other guns in the office.

Q. This was asked by Daniel Benitez?

A. Yes.

Q. What was his response?



A. No.

Q. He said, "No,"?

A. He said, "No, that is it."

Q. Then what happened?

A. I believe the group went outside because Mr. Estevez went out to the workshop and we all followed him.

Q. Do you know why he went out to the workshop?

A. No, sir, but at that time he was not restrained to the office.

Q. Was he under arrest?

A. No.

Q. Was it your intentions to place him under arrest?

A. Yes.

Q. All right, please continue.

A. So I believe he was called out or something to that effect, and he went to the workshop and was doing something or explaining something to an employee and showing him something or explaining something to him in regard to his vessel being constructed there.



At that time Daniel Benitez noticed a baseball cap over an object and it was a .38 revolver hidden underneath the baseball cap.

Q Was it completely hidden?

A Almost hidden and it was -- there was other clothing around it but I don't know how he came upon that gun.

Q Did you see it?

A Yes, sir, after it was taken from the clothing that was hiding it.

Q Prior to that you did not see it; you do not know if it was completely covered?

A I am only stating what Benitez said.

Q Where was this?

A This was the corridor again and it would be to your right and there was a table adjacent to the wall that separates the corridor and the workshop.

Q Was there anybody standing near that?

A Again, I did not see the gun so I could not answer that.





Q Did you see when Daniel Benitez took the gun from that area?

A I saw him a little bit afterwards when he was taking it out but not immediately.

Q All right, continue.

A I was by the office door exiting it.

Q The guns that were first seen in the office were what?

A There were four Heckler and Koch (Phonetic).

Q Where was that found?

A Those are the four guns.

Q All right, continue.

A There was a 308 with a clip.

There was a semi-automatic rifle and a clip which contained 18 and there was one in the chamber which made it 19 rounds.

Q All right, continue.

A There was one with an adjustable butt. It also had an adjustable sight.

Q What other weapons if any were found in the office?



A. There was a Browning semi-automatic pistol that I found.

Q Where did you find that?

A. At that time I came back because after the revolver was found --

Q By Benitez?

A. Yes, sir, and we asked Mr. Don Estevez and I recall that we were going to go into the office and that we had to talk.

Q Who said that?

A. I believe that Daniel did because he was upset that Ramon had lied to him.

You see, he said that there were no other guns on the premises and there was one being hidden underneath the cap.

Q Sir, did you have any knowledge that Ramon Don Estevez knew that the gun was there?

A. I don't have any knowledge that he knew.

Q Insofar as you know did any officer have any knowledge that Ramon Don Estevez knew that the gun was there?

A. I couldn't answer that question.



Q You do not know and you have no knowledge yourself and you do not know of any knowledge that any officer had?

A I do not know about the other officers but I am sure they didn't know either.

However, I cannot say that they knew.

You see, you can presume that he had knowledge but you just don't lay guns around do you?

Q Well, it is an assumption that you are making?

A That is right.

Q You do not know that Ramon Don Estevez was lying when he said that there were no other guns around?

A I don't know if he was lying.

I am going on a statement made by another detective.

Q So, now after this other gun was observed Daniel Benitez said to him "Let us go into the office and we have to talk"?



A. Yes, sir.

Now, at that time I was exiting like I said.

When that gun was found I was exiting the office.

Once I heard that however, I went back into the office and I began to look at the plaques.

I began to look at the diplomas. The diplomas are clearly marked Ramon Don Estevez.

Q How many were there?

A. There were three that I recall.

They were dealing with marine excellence in regard to boats and the manufacture of them and there were three that I can recall.

He had a flag and other things there also.

I could not give you an exact discription, sir.

Q Please go on.

A. So I was like at the plaques on the wall and I turned around and I was by where the window is or a little bit closer as to this



— desk is to the wall like this. (Indicating)

So here I am and this is the wall, and there is about three feet and there is enough room to allow a chair to be moved back and forth. (Indicating)

Q By your discription you are standing behind the desk?

A Yes, sir, his desk.

Q Please go on.

A So this is the drawer and the drawer was ajar and we have a Browning which I can identify because I own one.

The drawer was ajar approximately two or three inches and I cannot tell you exactly.

Q You saw a gun?

A I just glanced and I saw the butt end.

Q Were you looking for other guns?

A I was just looking around and I was not looking for other guns and I was just looking around.

Q What were you looking for?

A The plaques because I had in



— mind perhaps the trial date and that it would come up and the question would come up as to how do you know this man is Ramon Don Estevez because of the name, you see.

Q You thought that there might be a problem with whether or not this is actually Don Estevez's office?

A. Why not?

Q I need an answer.

A. That is my answer.

Q You were just looking around?

A. Yes.

Q You looked into this drawer and you saw a gun?

A. Yes.

Q Then what did you do?

A. I took it from the drawer and I took the clip out and took the rounds from the chamber out.

You see, I didn't know whether it was loaded or not so I assumed the weapon was loaded.

— Again, I informed Daniel Benitez



that I found this automatic pistol within that drawer.

At that time he was placed under arrest.

Q Was Mr. Don Estevez in the office when you found that gun?

A. He was coming back with Daniel Benitez and Mr. Keller.

Perhaps he was in the process of entering the office.

I informed Daniel Benitez as he came in that I had found the automatic pistol.

Q Did you ever, prior to the time you found that gun in the drawer, had you left the office?

A. No, sir, like I stated before we went out and they went out to the workshop.

Now, that is because Ramon Don Estevez had been called there, I believe.

Then they found the revolver and they asked Ramon Don Estevez to come back and I was leaving the office and so I went back in.



Q Once you entered it the first time you had not left it when you found the second gun?

A That is correct, I did not leave.

You see, I didn't leave it and come back, and I almost did but I believe I said it to you three times now.

Q You did not actually leave the office?

A No, sir, I was in the general vicinity.

Q Did you pass through the portel?

A Yes.

Q Where did you go?

A Right there because I returned immediately.

Q How far past the portel did you get?

A Exactly?

Q As close as you possibly can tell us?

A About two steps.





Q It was at that time when you saw Daniel Benitez when he had just recovered a gun underneath the cap?

A He was holding a revolver from underneath some clothing.

He was holding the revolver underneath the baseball cap and stating that this was underneath the baseball cap.

Q So then you decided to go back into the office and look around some more?

A Just conducting what I was doing.

Q Where were you going when you started to leave the office?

A With the group.

Q Would you say that it was the fact that Daniel Benitez found this other gun that caused you to go back into the office?

A Caused me to go back into the office?

Q Sir, you started to leave and then you went back in and is the reason you went back in because Daniel found another gun?

A Do you want me to say "Yes," and do you want me to say, "I was looking for guns,"



—  
sir?

Q Please tell me the answer if you would.

A I went back in.

MR. MECHANIC: Mr. Reporter this will be off the record.

(Thereupon, an off-the-record discussion was had.)

BY MR. GOLDSTEIN:

Q Now, sir, do you understand my question?

A Please repeat it.

Q Well, sir, you state that you were about to leave the office and you had exited and gone through the portel several feet.

Then you turned around and went back in.

What caused you to turn around and go back into the office?

A It was the fact that they were coming back.

—



It was because as I stated that they had asked Ramon to go back into the office to talk this thing over.

Q. You went back into the office and you were looking around and you found a gun in the drawer?

A. Yes.

Q. What happened then?

A. He was informed he would be arrested.

Q. For what?

A. Possession of firearms by a convicted felon.

Q. Who informed him of that?

A. Daniel Benitez.

Q. Where did this take place?

A. In the office.

Q. Was anybody else present?

A. Yes.

Q. Who?

A. Myself, Daniel Benitez and Joseph Benitez.

I do not recall whether



Detective Rapado was there.

Then I heard it, and I believe that Daniel Benitez -- Daniel informed him and Joseph Benitez was there and Mr. Keller was also there.

Q What happened next?

A What do you mean?

Q What happened next, and you say he was placed under arrest and then what happened?

A He was taken to a car outside and then we conducted a more thorough search of the area.

Q What do you mean by the area?

A The office.

Q The office and the factory?

A The office and the factory was then searched by Detective Rapado and nothing was found.

Q Did you find anything else in the office?

A We found two boxes and two black



— boxes and you could not see them readily and they were covered by Christmas wrapping paper.

We asked him what are those boxes and the reason that prompted me to ask that is because I saw two electrical prongs coming out of the boxes and since we have been having a rash of bombings I asked him "What is this?"

Q What did he say?

A He said that this is just a joke.

Then I said to him, " You do not mind if I uncover it?"

He said, "It is just a joke."

Q Did he ever answer that question "You don't mind if I open this?"

A He said finally about four or five times that it is just a joke.

He said, "Go ahead and open it."

Q You did so?

A Yes, I opened it and I just uncovered the boxes and it was painted black with letters painted in white.

Now the letters were "See for explosives, danger," and that was on all four



sides of the boxes.

We assumed that the boxes contained explosives.

Q Did you open it and did you find out what was inside?

A After contacting Tom Brodie and then they advised at the site and they advised that the device was removed from the diesel company and then we took them out to the range.

At that time one box was carefully opened and we determined that the wires led into concrete wrapped in rugs and they were not explosives.

Q It was just a joke?

A Yes.

Q How about the other boxes?

A It would be the same.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q When you went down there originally assuming the report that you had read was true, and that it proved out to be accurate you were desirous to arrest Ramon Don Estevez and that was your purpose, was it not?



A. That is right.

Q. You weren't going to rap with him?

A. No.

Q. In regard to the factory and that is the Pirhanna-Diesel Company and have you ever had any dealings with it before, and by dealings with it I mean either Ramon or the factory or prior bombing attempts there?

A. Yes.

Q. How many?

A. That I have been a part of and the first time I went there is when they found a 14 pound device in front of its factory.

Q. Did it explode and was it disarmed?

A. Yes, sir, with two or three seconds left to explode according to the technicians.

Q. What was the date of that or how many weeks a month was it?

A. Almost a year ago.

Q. In April?



A. Yes, 1975.

Q. How about any other times?

A. The other times when we were at the factory and there were four times.

Now, the second time, and I do not recall why and it was not to arrest him.

Q. Was it involving explosives or threats to him?

A. He made a complaint and he contacted our complaint office.

He said that he had been harrassed and threatened and we responded.

Q. Did anything come of it?

A. Nothing, and we just took a statement and left.

Q. What happened and what about the next time?

A. On the third time there was a threat against Ramon Don Estevez to the fact that they would kill him if he delivered his bi-weekly newspaper.

So we responded at 8:00 o'clock and we were there and he was not.





— We later learned through Miami Beach that he was around town collecting his newspaper.

So we were there in the office and he was collecting his newspaper contrary to what he said and that is that he was afraid.

Q Did he say he was afraid?

A Of course, he contacted our office.

Q He said he had received a threat?

A Yes.

Q What about the fourth time?

A That is with Mr. Keller.

Q How about the time with Mr. Benitez or which ever one it was, and I do not know, and whether by telephone or in person tried to contact Don Estevez with reference to a press conference that he was calling and O.C.B. warned him that O.C.B. received a threat against his life and you were calling him to warn him about that?

A He has been involved in so many  
— I just don't recall.



Q. Do you recall anything like that or anything similar to that?

A. Yes, sir, I heard something like that.

Q. You were not part of that?

A. No.

BY MR. GOLDSTEIN:

Q. The first time you said you were there was in April of 1975 and there was a bomb?

A. Yes, sir, thereabouts.

Q. Was there a bomb found?

A. Yes.

Q. How did that call come through?

A. According to the Federal report -- you see, when we arrived, we were informed that Ramon was taking out trash cans, from the patio area that enclosed --

Q. I do not mean the fact how it came about, and were you with O.C.B.?

A. Yes.

Q. How come O.C.B. responded to that?

A. I am with the activist unit and we responded to all of the bombings or possible



bombings or threats of bombings.

That is if there is a possibility of it or there being one we are called.

Q Is that the unit you are with now?

A Yes, now.

Q Who else is in that unit?

A Vetterick, Daniel Benitez, myself, Joseph Benitez and several other guys.

However, sir, not in the particular case.

Q You mentioned about seeing a plaque?

A (No response.)

MR. MECHANIC: One moment.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q Did you ever have any information personally to be involved with Ramon or his family?

A Myself?

Q Yes.

A Aside from what I related no, sir.

There was one I overheard in the office also.



Q From the time you personally received the report of October 12 or whatever length of time it took before you acted upon it it was your intention to make an arrest of Ramon if in fact guns were there?

A Yes.

Q Was there anything preventing you from obtaining a warrant to go out to that factory as opposed to just going out there?

A My personal opinion would be is that I would be sure that the weapons would be there.

I mean I don't think a Judge would sign a warrant because I come into his office and say "Judge, I believe Ramon, a convicted felon, is holding arms, because this report states so."

I would go out there and verify the information and then act upon it.

Q In other words you did not think you could have secured a warrant based on the information?

A I do not think so.

Q Is that the reason?



A. I was not going to put my whole credence on that fact.

I am certain they were there but by the time I would go to a judge and then act upon that information they could have removed it.

Q. But there is no doubt that it was your desire to go out there and to look around and if in fact you found any type of weapons then you would arrest him?

A. Yes.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Cuba.

MR. MECHANIC: Mr. Reporter, this will be off the record.

(Thereupon, an off-the-record discussion was had.)

MR. GOLDSTEIN: Let us put it on the record.

THE WITNESS: In regard to embarrassing me from being born in Cuba and there is no hassle about that.



What is the embarrassment for?

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q If someone dislikes on a personal level as opposed to an objective level they could be swayed by their actions?

A Yes, sir, I am aware of that.

MR. WOODARD: Is that a question?

MR. MECHANIC: That is what I meant by it.

MR. WOODARD: All right.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q You were born in Cuba?

A Yes.

Q You are an American citizen?

A Yes.

Q You know Mr. Don Estevez and you have known him for what period of time?

A Less than a year and since I became or was transferred to the Organized Crime Bureau.

Q Do you have any personal dislike for Mr. Don Estevez?



A. No.

Q Do you have any personal dislike for his views on Cuba?

A. No.

Q You indicated earlier that it was when that gun was seen in that drawer as opposed to the other guns at the sofa and it is that when that gun was found that you then placed him under arrest or when he was then placed under arrest?

A. No, sir.

He was going to be arrested for the Heckler-Koch (Phonetic) rifles.

Q You had said that he was not under arrest and that he was free to leave that office?

A. He was not restrained in the office and I believe I stated that.

Q He was going to be arrested as soon as you went into that office?

A. Yes.

Q Regardless of whether you found any other guns?



A. Yes.

Q. The plaques so that you say that you saw and you are telling us now that on the front of his desk indicating here and that there was a name plate? (Indicating)

A. Yes, sir.

Q. That name plate said what?

A. That was a name plate and it is made of wood and that is carved wood.

It was slanted at an angle and it said "Ramon Don Estevez".

Q. You are positive of that?

A. Yes, sir.

There have been four times I have been there and I have seen it.

Q. Did you know Armando Barbillo?

A. Yes, I know Armando Barbillo.

Q. What about Mr. Marin?

A. I know him.

Q. Do you have any personal knowledge as to how many different people acted in the capacity of security for the company?

A. How many?





Q Yes.

A No.

Q Those I have mentioned do, in fact, act as security and did they tell you that?

A Yes, sir, so they claim.

Q The weapons that were found were any of them registered to Ramon Don Estevez?

A I believe that the three of the rifles were registered to Juaua Bamburen.

One was registered to Mrs. Daisy Don Estevez.

Q The pistols were registered to the various names I mentioned?

A The Browning was registered to Mr. Barbillo.

The revolver was registered to Mr. Marin.

Q Some of the these people, and Mr. Marin have identifications as to prior security guards under various companies, and do you know that?

A Mr. Marin had an identification of an ex-security organization owned and operated by a Mr. Batista and that was dissolved way before



— this case ever came about and that was unvalid ID.

Q It was expired but it had his right name on it?

A I am sorry it was expired and it was no longer --

Q Did anyone tell you that those guns were used for anything other than what has already been mentioned were security and that it was with security with those people?

A No.

Q Did you have any reason, and by that I mean, did you ever see Mr. Don Estevez handle those weapons or any of those weapons?

A No.

Q You mentioned that you have been to that place three or four times?

A Yes.

Q That was unrelated to this case?

A That is right.

Q Have you ever at any time seen him handle any weapons?

A (No response.)

— Q In regard to the fingerprints and



— they were not recovered or even taken, and I do not believe that they showed that they were ever touched by Mr. Don Estevez were they?

A. So far as I know, no, sir.

Q Did anyone who you could name who is still around tell you that those guns are his meaning where they saw him in possession of them?

A. No, sir.

Q Do you have any knowledge, and do you know Don Estevez is on Federal probation for illegal re-entry or something like that?

A. I was aware that he was on probation for the extortion case.

Q You did not know about the Federal probation?

A. I do not know about the Federal probation and probably he was but I was not aware of it.

Q Do you have any knowledge as to at some point in time after I believe the third threat that Mr. Don Estevez began making attempts to secure permission to arm himself in that factory — for protection and did Mr. Keller or anybody



— mention that to you?

A. No.

Q When these were all found and it was told to you that it was for security did Mr. Don Estevez tell you why for security and for what purpose?

A. He just said it was for security.

Q Now, sir, these photographs and that is when the time you were there or any of the times you were there and do they somewhat accurately depict the warehouse; was it loaded with stuff?

A. Yes.

Q Did you ever learn what that stuff was?

A. Yes.

Q From whom or -- sir, did you personally look?

A. That is we personally looked into that.

Q What was that?

A. It was for operation Pueblo de Cuba



— and those were to take the packages to the people in Cuba and that is what he claimed they were for.

Q This was in fact stored in that warehouse?

A. Yes.

Q Do you know the value of all of that stuff?

A. (No response.)

Q Do you know approximately the value of the boat, and that is the 63 foot boat to ship all of that stuff?

A. Mr. Don Estevez claims it was a half a million dollars or something like that.

Q You do not personally know?

A. No.

Q This stuff and the boat being constructed was in fact there between the 12th and the 21st when you were there, was it not?

A. Yes.

Q Did you ever have any personal conversations with Marin?

A. No, not until we found the gun --  
— prior to that, no, sir.



Q When you say the gun meaning the pistol?

A The revolver.

Q What conversations did you have with him?

A It was to the effect as to the security guards and we told him that the agency he was referring to has been dissolved.

Q He said, "That is my gun," didn't he?

A Yes, sir.

Q Was it registered to him?

A Yes.

Q The Browning that was Barbillo's was he ever questioned about it?

A Barbillo has disappeared.

Q Was it registered to Barbillo?

A There is a paper that indicated that the Browning is operated by --

Q These papers were checked out with the Public Safety Department?

A Yes, sir, and it states Armando Barbillo and it indicates that.



Q None of these guns were stolen?

A No.

Q The H and K's are lawfully over the counter type weapons that could be purchased anywhere assuming they stocked them like at the Tamiami Gun Shop?

A You and I could purchase it, yes.

Q You do not need any special prerequisites in order to get that gun?

A No.

Q Are you familiar with the Tamiami Gun Shop?

A I know where it is.

Q Do you know where those guns were bought?

A Tamiami Gun Shop.

Q Right in the same gun shop there are many types of weapons far more powerful than those that they sell over the counter, and do you know about that?

A The ones I have been in contact with are the regular semi-automatic shot-guns and pistols and revolvers.



Now, insofar as them selling other devices more powerful --

Q Well that would be the rifles which are more powerful than those H and K's?

MR. WOODARD: Objection, powerful, and that has nothing to do with this case.

THE WITNESS: What do you mean?

MR. WOODARD: Those weapons were purchased legally at the Tamiami Gun Shop and there was no issue with that.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q Did you ever make any statement to Mr. Keller, or when any statement was made when it was said "We are going out there to arrest him if he has guns," and did Mr. Keller hear this?

A We informed Mr. Keller why we were going out there and if there were guns there were considering arresting him.

Q Let us assume that you got out there and everything you testified to was the same except when you got there those guns or whatever you found were being carried or held by the owners?





MR. WOODARD: Do not answer the question.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q The question is if that were the case would you still have arrested Ramon Don Estevez?

MR. WOODARD: Objection to it.

MR. MECHANIC: Mr. Reporter, certify the question.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q Did you ever have an occasion to go to the Tamiami Gun Shop to check out who, in fact, purchased these guns?

A I didn't go to the Tamiami Gun Shop but I also don't think any of the detectives went and we went through our records section and obtained the proper forms.

Q When you say the registration you just accepted that as valid from your bureau?

A Yes.

MR. MECHANIC: All right.

BY MR. GOLDSTEIN:

Q You said when you were in the



— office you were looking around at the plaques and other things were in the office because you felt there might be a question as to whose office it is?

A. Correct.

Q. I would assume that that is because you thought there might be a question as to the actual possession of this weapon or these weapons?

A. No, sir, because the office is not marked Ramon Don Estevez and it is just an office.

Q. You thought that the problem would be as to who possessed these guns?

A. No.

You see, for constructive possession and he could have picked up that rifle or the Browning and by law a convicted felon is not supposed to do that.

Q. Did you assume the problem would be determining who was in possession be it constructive or otherwise and who was in possession?

A. I didn't believe there would be any problems.

It was my contention for being  
— certain that the office belonged to Ramon and



— and it would be a little more and it would have been on the average, sir, of ten hours I guess.

Q Insofar as the other time when you went there you have no idea who uses that desk or who works behind the desk?

A If I am not there I do not know who is using it and I am only stating something that I have seen.

Q Did any of the officers feel that fingerprints were important?

MR. WOODARD: Objection, they did not take them and so therefore it is irrelevant.

MR. GOLDSTEIN: Are you instructing him not to answer?

MR. WOODARD: Yes, sir.

MR. GOLDSTEIN: Certify it.

BY MR. MECHANIC:

Q About the couch, did anyone mention that it was slept on?

A I believe it was, and that is part of the testimony in the preliminary hearing.

Q Did you ever hear that before — other than at the preliminary hearing?



A. No, if I did I do not recall it.

MR. MECHANIC: Okay.

BY MR. GOLDSTEIN:

Q Did you discuss your testimony here with Mr. Woodard before giving this testimony?

A. No. You see, Mr. Woodard was not in the office.

Q I mean at any time prior to giving this testimony today?

A. I have not had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Woodard.

Q Did you discuss your testimony with any supervisor?

A. No, sir, what is there to discuss?

Q Well it is simple.

A. I answered you.

Q Did you discuss it with any of the officers involved in this case?

A. Discussed it; we discuss cases and we discussed the case regarding Don Estevez on many occasions.

However, insofar as sitting down and saying that this is how we are going to answer



— Mr. Don Estevez's attorneys, no, sir.

Q Did you discuss this case with your fellow officers who were also involved?

A Prior to this deposition you mean?

A Yes.

A Like I stated before, we have discussed the Ramon Don Estevez case many times.

MR. GOLDSTEIN: I have nothing further.

MR. WOODARD: No questions.

THE WITNESS: I do not waive.

(Thereupon this deposition was concluded.)

Sworn to and subscribed before me  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public



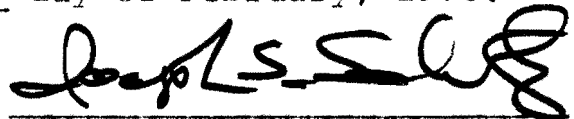
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA :  
:  
COUNTY OF DADE :

I, JOSEPH S. SCHWARTZ, Court  
Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of  
Florida at Large, do hereby certify that I reported  
the deposition of IGNACIO VASQUEZ, a witness called  
on behalf of the Defendant in the above-styled  
cause; that the said witness was duly sworn by me;  
and that the foregoing pages, numbered from 1 to  
62, inclusive, constitute a true and correct record  
of the deposition by said witness.

I further certify that I am not an  
attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor a  
relative or employee of any attorney or counsel  
connected with the action, nor financially interested  
in the action.

WITNESS my hand and official seal  
in the City of Miami, County of Dade, State of  
Florida, this 20 day of February, 1976.



Joseph S. Schwartz

My commission expires July 8, 1976.

